

LTC Kelly Marie Laurel for nearly 25 years of service to this country. Although, to the Army, Kelly is irreplaceable, I am certain this exceptional citizen will continue to make great contributions to the United States as she embarks on the next chapter of her life.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DR. LEVI WATKINS, JR.

• Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, today I wish to salute Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr., a renowned cardiac surgeon who will retire at year's end from Johns Hopkins Medicine. During his 4-decade-long career, Dr. Watkins has had a profound impact on American health care—through the countless patients he has treated, the students he has recruited and mentored, and the cultural diversity he has advanced.

Levi Watkins, Jr. grew up in Montgomery, AL, the third of Dr. and Mrs. Levi Watkins, Sr.'s six children. At the Alabama State Laboratory High School, Watkins excelled in academics and athletics: he graduated valedictorian and was selected for the Montgomery All-Star basketball team. It was in Alabama that he witnessed the early days of the civil rights movement. As a member of the First Baptist Church of Montgomery, Watkins developed a close friendship with his pastor, the Reverend Dr. Ralph David Abernathy, and later he attended Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, where he was introduced to the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the King family.

Watkins majored in biology as an undergraduate at Tennessee State University, where he was elected president of the student body and joined Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Alpha Kappa Mu honor society, Beta Kappa Chi honor society, and many other notable organizations. Watkins also led many student movements on campus and graduated with highest honors.

Dr. Watkins' medical career has been one of monumental firsts. In 1966, he integrated the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine as the first African-American student ever admitted. He was later selected to become a member of Alpha Omega Alpha medical honor society. Watkins arrived at Johns Hopkins Hospital in 1970 as a general surgery intern and became the first African-American chief resident in cardiac surgery in the institution's history. There, in 1980, he performed the world's first implantation of an automatic heart defibrillator in a human—a procedure that is now performed worldwide and has since saved tens of thousands of lives. In 1991, Dr. Watkins became the first African-American at Johns Hopkins promoted to full professor of cardiac surgery. He was named the first African-American associate dean in the School of Medicine and established the nation's first

postdoctoral association, helping to revolutionize the culture of postdoctoral education in the United States. Today, there are more than 50 such associations across the nation.

Dr. Watkins has been a fierce advocate for fairness and diversity. He joined the Hopkins School of Medicine's admissions committee in 1979, and began recruiting minority applicants and sponsoring an annual welcoming and networking reception for new students. In 1982, he founded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration at Hopkins, an annual event that has brought an illustrious array of speakers to Baltimore, including Coretta Scott King, Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou, Stevie Wonder, and Taylor Branch.

In October 2002, Vanderbilt University established a Professorship and Associate Deanship in his name; in October 2005, Dr. Watkins' portrait was unveiled at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine honoring his life's work; and, in 2008, Vanderbilt bestowed upon Dr. Watkins its "Most Distinguished Alumnus Award."

Since 2006, when he stopped performing surgery, Dr. Watkins has remained a powerful presence and an important influence on Johns Hopkins and the city of Baltimore. In December 2008, he was honored by the National Black Caucus of State Legislators with the Nation Builders Award, along with President-Elect Barack Obama, and James H. Meredith. In January of 2012, he was appointed co-chair of Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake's transition team for health and human services.

I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. well as he embarks upon the next phase of his lifelong journey to improve the health and well-being of others.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. LYNN KILCHENSTEIN

• Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Lynn Kilchenstein, president of the New Hampshire Technical Institute, who will step down from her position at the end of the year. Dr. Kilchenstein has demonstrated exceptional leadership at NHTI for the last 10 years, and I thank her for her strong commitment to the students of New Hampshire. While I know she will be missed by the school and the community, I join Dr. Kilchenstein's family, friends, and colleagues in acknowledging her many achievements and celebrating her service.

Dr. Kilchenstein's substantial contributions to NHTI began when she joined the faculty as an English professor 26 years ago. Prior to becoming president, she also served as head of the English Department, faculty forum president, and associate vice president of academic affairs. In each position Dr. Kilchenstein made an impact, from her direct instruction of students to the development of NHTI's Academic Success Council.

In 2003, Dr. Kilchenstein was named the president of NHTI, and under her leadership the campus has been transformed with numerous projects that have improved social and academic spaces. Dr. Kilchenstein has overseen the growth of NHTI's health programs, including the construction of the LEED-certified Beverly D. Grappone Hall and the renovation of MacRury Hall, both of which feature new facilities and equipment that allow students to learn in hands-on medical environments.

During Dr. Kilchenstein's tenure, NHTI expanded class offerings, created new liberal arts programs and teacher education classes, grew existing programs, and successfully completed the reaccreditation process.

In addition to her leadership role at NHTI, Dr. Kilchenstein is also an involved and dedicated member of the Concord community. She served for 8 years on the Greater Concord Chamber Board of Directors and currently sits on the Governor's Advanced Manufacturing and Education Advisory Council, the Capitol Center for the Arts Board, the Creative Concord Committee, and the Concord Housing Commission. To recognize her service, the Greater Concord Area Chamber of Commerce presented Dr. Kilchenstein with the Pinnacle Award for Business Leader of the Year in 2011.

I know that everyone at the New Hampshire Technical Institute and in the community of Concord joins me in thanking Dr. Kilchenstein for her service and wishes her well in all her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH BLISS

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Joseph Bliss, an intern in my Sioux Falls, SD, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Joseph is a graduate of Roosevelt High School in Sioux Falls, SD. Currently, he is attending University of South Dakota, where he is majoring in political science and criminal justice. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Joseph for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO BRANDON FUSARO

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Brandon Fusaro, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Brandon is a graduate of Burncoat High School in Worcester, MA. Currently, he is attending George Washington University, where he is majoring in exercise science. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.